



STATUS OF WOMEN AND GIRLS IN SOUTH AFRICA 2015

TOWARDS THE UNITED NATION GENERAL ASSEMBLY MEETING ON THE NEW SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT GOALS (SDGs)





ABOUT THE REPORT

South Africa celebrates women every year during the month of August. In the fight against poverty, African girls and women are among the most vulnerable; with less tools and opportunities to escape poverty than their male counterparts. Socially, economically, legally, girls and women in the poorest countries get a raw deal; for the girl child who is denied education or forced into marriage, or for the mother who risks death when she gives life, or the female farmer prevented from owning the land she works on. However, the ONE Campaign believes that when you empower and invest in girls and women, the entire community benefits. This makes investing in girls and women's development critical to the fight against poverty.

Thus ONE is calling for increased investment in the lives of millions of African girls and women across the continent. This brief focuses on amplifying this call in South Africa. In September 2015, the UN General Assembly (UNGA) will meet to adopt the Sustainable Development Goals (SDG). These are new goals that will direct global development efforts for the next 15 years. The event is an opportunity for the South African government and other world leaders to make strong commitments to place women's development at the core of the new SDGs. The Africa Union (AU) Heads of States Declaration of June 2015 to which the South African government was a signatory, was strongly in favour of this position. ONE believes South Africa has a central leadership role to play in demonstrating how this declaration will be implemented in South Africa and across the continent, and taken forward into the September UNGA meetings and beyond. Given the significance of the 2015 AU declaration on women's empowerment and the new 2015 UN development agenda, this report summarises the status of progress towards the development of women and girls in South Africa.



Background

The African Union (AU) declared 2015 as the Year of Women Empowerment and Development towards Africa's Agenda 2063. During the AU summit held in South Africa in June, African Heads of states including South Africa's President Jacob Zuma made commitments to eliminate all barriers to social, political and economic participation faced by African women and girls by 2020. The specific commitments are:

- To enhance women's contribution and benefits from formal agriculture or agro business value chains
- To enhance women's access to health
- To push forward women's economic and political empowerment
- To enhance the agenda on Women, Peace and Security
- To enhance women's participation in governance
- To enhance women and girls' access to education, science, and technology
- To have mutual accountability to actions and results

WHERE PROGRESS HAS BEEN MADE

To date, the South African government has produced a number of policies and legislation in pursuit of women's empowerment. For instance, the Constitution includes Section 9 which promotes equality for all persons and freedom from discrimination and the Employment Equity Act, No 55 (1998) which strives to achieve equity in the workplace by promoting fair treatment in employment. The establishment of the Ministry in the Presidency responsible for women with a mandate to champion the advancement of women's socio-economic empowerment in May of 2014 by President Jacob Zuma is also of great significance.

On the political front, South Africa has seen a rise in the number of women holding political office in the last 20 years. Prior to 1994, the South African Parliament had a mere 2.7% representation of women. Following the first democratic elections in April 1994, female representation rose to 27.7%. In 1999 that figure increased to 30% and then to 32.7% in 2004. After the 2014 general elections, women occupied 43% of Cabinet posts, 46% of Deputy Minister Positions, and 41% parliamentary posts.¹ As of July 2015, there were over 2 million more registered female voters (13,784,027) than male (11,288,828).²

On the economic front, statistics indicated that women contributed significantly to the economy. 2010 census figures estimated that 51% of women within the country were active contributors to

¹ <http://www.gov.za/womens-month-1-31-aug-2015>

² <http://www.elections.org.za/content/Voters-Roll/Registration-statistics/>



South Africa's GDP³, though UNDP 2013 dates estimates women's contribution at 37%.⁴ The South African's government's adoption of United Nations Resolution 53/197 on the International Year of Credit 2005 which supports women's access to credit is an example of one of the ways it has committed to promoting women's economic empowerment. The Department of Trade and Industry has been implementing several initiatives in line with the Resolution, for instance the Isivande Women's Fund (IWF) which aims to accelerate women's economic empowerment by providing more affordable, usable and responsive finance than is currently available. The IWF targets 60% or more owned or managed enterprises which have been operating for two years or more with a loan range between R 30 000 and R2 million.⁵

One particular Government Department which has been immensely engaged in programmes and initiatives to economically and socially empower women is the Department of Social Development. The Department runs a Social Grant system from which according to the Centre for Social Development in Africa (CSDA) the majority of child grant beneficiaries (96%) are women.⁶ CSDA argues that these child support grants enhance women's power and control over household decision-making in financial matters, general household spending and in relation to child well-being, especially in poor communities. The Department also runs Early Childhood Development Programmes (ECDs) which ensure kids are well fed and protected. These ECDs are largely run by women and hence provide gainful employment to many women.

Other Government sponsored programmes for women include the following:

1. The Corporate Governance Development Programme run by the Department of Trade and Industry (DTI) was initiated in 2013 to empower women by preparing them for positions on the boards of public and private entities. In 2014, 160 women graduated from the programme exceeding its initial target of training 150 women for that year.⁷
2. The Ilima/Letsema Programme, is managed by the Department of Agriculture together with the African Farmers' Association of South Africa (AFASA). The Ilima/Letsema programme began in 2013 with the aim of mobilising farmers, women and youth into agricultural cooperatives. It specifically targeted women farmers and vulnerable households at the grassroots level. In 2013, R415, 000 was invested in the programme and since its inception in 2008, a total of about R1; 201 million has been spent by all the provinces. Between 2009 and 2012, more than 129,400 households were supported with starter packs for household vegetable production, provision of feeds for poultry and planting of fruit trees. The program also supported 1,202 community gardens and put 226,572.76 ha of land into production covering the following commodities: maize, sugarcane, sunflower, grains, vegetables, fruit trees and table grapes.

³ According to the 2010 Census figures - <http://www.bwasa.co.za/news/women-s-contribution-to-the-economy-we-cannot-ignore-the-evidence>

⁴ UNDP for the Gender Related Development Index 2013

⁵ Department of Women, South Africa 2015

⁶ <https://africacheck.org/factsheets/separating-myth-from-reality-a-guide-to-social-grants-in-south-africa/>

⁷ <https://www.thedti.gov.za/editmedia.jsp?id=3040>

In the health sector, South Africa has a functioning health service with good policies and strong leadership. The country has the largest antiretroviral (ARV) programme in the world, with 3 million people on ARVs as of December 2014. This programme has significantly contributed to reducing mother to child transmission from 3.5% in 2010 to 2.7% in 2011 (the target was 7.5% by 2016).⁸ This has ensured child survival and prolonged life with infant mortality rate due to HIV falling from about 58 infant deaths per 1,000 live births in 2002 to 34 infant deaths per 1,000 live births in 2014.⁹ Over and above, the share of government spending allocated to health was 14% in 2013, 1% shy of the minimum agreed in the Abuja Declaration. Of note in the health budget is that R200 million in fiscal year (FY) 2014-2015 and FY2015-2016 was specifically allocated towards free cervical cancer vaccines for girls aged 9 to 12 as a preventative measure against cervical cancer before they become sexually active and also as a cost-effective way of reducing the lifetime risk of cancer in resource-constrained environments.¹⁰

South Africa has seen an improvement when it comes to girls and women's access to education. In the 2014 national budget, education and training received the lion's share of investment, with an estimated allocation of R254 billion.¹¹ This resulted in an increase in the enrolment of girls and women in schools.. For instance, the gross enrolment ratio¹² for secondary education was higher in females compared to males between 2012-2013 with an increase from 103.5% to 114.4% in females compared to 100.3% and 107.1% for males.¹³ The same is true for the gross enrolment ratio for tertiary education, in 2012 - females had a 22.7% gross enrolment rate compared to 16.6% for men.

In the fight against gender based violence there have been notable inroads. In 1999, the Judiciary established the Sexual Offences and Community Affairs (SOCA) Unit and the Sexual Offences Courts were created to address sexual offences.. In addition, the SOCA Unit established 24-hour centres called Thuthuzela Care Centres (TTCs) for rape victims and victims of sexual and domestic violence. These centres were created to allow for rape victims to be assisted in a more victim-friendly environment away from crowds and intimidating environments like police stations. The centres have been praised for their integrated approach as they are facilitated by a top level inter-departmental management team comprised of representatives from the Departments of Justice, Health, Education, Treasury, Correctional Services, Police, Social Development and designated civil society organisations. The number of these centres increased from 10, in 2008, to 35 in 2013. The Family Violence, Child Protection and Sexual Offences (FCS) units, originally introduced in 1996 and later phased out in the 1990's, were reintroduced in 2010 to all 176 SAPS clusters across the country. By October 2013, the FCS workforce totalled more than 2,200.

The Department of Social Development has been greatly involved in the fight against gender based violence. The Department currently has a 24hr hotline manned by social workers. People can call or send "please call me" and they will be called back. Recently as part of Women's month celebrations,

⁸ See <http://www.health-e.org.za/2014/04/11/arv-programme-saves-780-000-lives/>

⁹ <http://www.bbc.com/news/world-africa-28592255>

¹⁰ http://za.boell.org/sites/default/files/wlc_eye_on_the_money_2014.pdf - see page 34

¹¹ <http://www.southafrica.info/business/economy/policies/budget2014b.htm#Va-hHaSqBc>

¹² Number of pupils or students enrolled in a given level of education, regardless of age, expressed as a percentage of the official school-age population corresponding to the same level of education.

¹³ <http://www.uis.unesco.org/DataCentre/Pages/country-profile.aspx?code=ZAF®ioncode=40540>



on August 20 2015, the Hlayisani White Door Centre of Hope at Nsikazi Stadium in Mpumalanga Province was launched. The Centre serves as a temporary shelter which provides accommodation and other basic needs such as food, clothing as well as counselling and psycho-social support to abused women and the centres and further protects women from secondary abuse. The centre is part of a model which was initiated by Gauteng province in 2010 which to date has successfully established 27 white door facilities. Eastern Cape Province also adopted a similar model in 2013 and 100 white door centres have already been established in the province. In other words the model has been a resounding success in helping women affected by gender based violence.

WHERE MORE WORK MUST BE DONE

Health

There are more than 6 million people living with HIV/AIDS in South Africa.¹⁴ Girls and women make up 56% of the HIV/AIDS population, which is nearly 3.5 million.¹⁵ They have been affected the most by challenges like lack of easy access to medication and early access to pre-natal care to prevent the cases of mother to child transmission of HIV.¹⁶ The Department of Health has highlighted congestion at health centres as being a major problem due to the explosion of non-communicable diseases like diabetes and high blood pressure.¹⁷ One report highlighted that one of the complaints of the Department was that pregnant women found hospital and clinic staff to be hostile. This atmosphere is said to result in women's negative attitude towards receiving prenatal care.¹⁸ Although the Minister of Health highlighted that the Department is working on solving these issues, tangible results are yet to be seen.

Access to Economic and Political Opportunities

South Africa has been described as one of the most unequal societies in the world economically in terms of human opportunity.¹⁹ When it comes to gender, women's incomes in South Africa are 42 percent less than those of men on average²⁰. This places them at a great disadvantage. In agriculture, it has been reported that women are responsible for up to 80% of food production, 60% of the harvesting, 80% of food storage and transport from fields to villages, 100% of the processing of basic foodstuffs, and 60% of marketing activities across the country²¹ and yet they rarely own the land or have tenure security over the land they are working on²². The fact that there is a lack of data on gender based land ownership in South Africa makes it difficult to fully know the progress which has been made and to evaluate the main running land programmes namely: the Land Redistribution Programme, the Land Tenure Programme, and the Land Restitution Programme.

¹⁴ Joseph. R. 2014. Infographic: A look at HIV/AIDS in South Africa 2014.

¹⁵ Human Science Research Council Annual Report 2014.

¹⁶ Despite the fact that SA has large and good ARV Program.

¹⁷ <http://www.destinyman.com/2015/07/01/sa-can-learn-cuba-hiv/>

¹⁸ <http://www.destinyman.com/2015/07/01/sa-can-learn-cuba-hiv/>

¹⁹ World Bank's South Africa Economic Update (2012) - http://siteresources.worldbank.org/INTAFRICA/Resources/257994-1342195607215/SAEU-July_2012_Full_Report.pdf

²⁰ Calculated from NIDS Data. Mean income at December 2012 level (using CPI to adjust for inflation).

²¹ <http://bizconnect.standardbank.co.za/sector-news/agriculturearticles/6-challenges-facing-women-in-farming.aspx>

²² Action Aid 2008

A need to strengthen sustainable livelihoods for African women producers and agri-business entrepreneurs still remains a challenge as women still face limited access to productive resources. For instance, most women being less experienced with the processes and procedures of borrowing from a banking institution, they tend to face greater challenges when it comes to securing credit. Women receive 7% of the agricultural extension services and less than 10% of the credit offered to small-scale farmers.²³ Other challenges that women encounter include limited access to technological advancements to reduce the amount of labour they require. Further, women have limited access to market opportunities, this limits them to local markets where prices are generally lower.²⁴

In terms of women's political empowerment, despite women being in the majority in the country (27,635,900 women compared to 26,366,000 men) and having more women on the voters roll, they still do not hold a majority of powerful positions in government or the private sector.

South Africa experienced a minor setback in its 50/50 by 2015 Campaign for women's representation in parliament. There was a 4% drop in women's representation in parliament in the May 2014 elections.²⁵ This was actually a setback as 44% women representation had been achieved in 2009.²⁶

With respect to budgets allocated to women's development, although South Africa scores as one of the most transparent budgets in Africa, (2nd only to New Zealand in the world scoring 90 out of 100 in the latest Open Budget Index)²⁷ there is no clear indication that the budget is gender responsive. For FY2015-2016 R187,002,000 was allocated to the Department of Women but it is not clear if this allocation was based on up-to-date gender disaggregated data.²⁸ Similarly, South Africa spends 6.4 % of its gross domestic product (GDP) on education (considerably more than many other emerging market economies) but this budget is all encompassing and does not have a specified percent set aside for educating the girl child or women. So whatever gains in education of the girl child and women are de facto. It is also not clear if or how women have been involved in the pre-budget processes, or if women are involved in the monitoring process of the use of money allocated towards their empowerment.

In conflict prevention, management, and peace-building, the government has yet to unveil any initiatives. So far, that work has been mainly done by civil society organisations such as The African Centre for the Constructive Resolution of Disputes (ACCORD) which has been running capacity building training programmes for women in conflict prevention and management. The South African government still needs take action on the United Nations Security Council Resolution 1325 which calls for increased women's participation in conflict prevention and management processes.²⁹

²³ Ibid

²⁴ Ibid

²⁵ <http://www.ngopulse.org/article/5050-2015-remains-elusive-dream>

²⁶ Ibid - Some sources say 41% - see footnote 1.

²⁷ <http://www.bdlive.co.za/opinion/2015/03/02/show-us-the-budget-africans-ask?service=print>

²⁸ <http://www.gov.za/speeches/budget-vote-media-briefing-minister-women-ms-susan-shabangu-13-may-2015-0000>

²⁹ http://www.accord.org.za/images/downloads/reports/1325_in_2020.pdf

Access to Education, Science, and Technology

The World Economic Forum's 2015 Human Capital Report ranked South Africa 92nd out of 124 surveyed countries in terms of high educational attainment and a correspondingly large share of high-skilled employment.³⁰ In the World Economic Forum's 2014 Gender Gap Index³¹ South Africa was ranked number 101 out of a surveyed 142 countries in terms of gender enrolment in primary education (with number 1 being the most highly ranked for the most equality in the enrolment in primary education and number 142 being the least ranked in terms of equality in the same area), this is matter of concern because South Africa is ranked lowly in the bottom 42.³² Both rankings are evidence that there is still much which needs to be done in terms of educating girls and women. The South African government has admitted that the improvement of access to quality education is one of the challenges they currently face.³³ A 2013 gender benchmarking study found that whilst South Africa demonstrated that women had more opportunities available to them than ever before, their participation in the science, technology workforce remained low and that women remained severely under-represented in degree programmes for engineering, physics and computer science³⁴ with only 28.5% women graduates.³⁵

Violence against Girls and Women & Access to Justice

Gender-based violence (GBV) remains a significant issue in South Africa with intimate partner violence accounting for 40% to 70% of female murder victims. At least 77% percent of women in Limpopo province, 51% of women in Gauteng, 45% of women in the Western Cape and 36% of women in KwaZulu-Natal have experienced some form of violence. GBV has had serious social and economic effects at the level of private individuals affected and the national economy at large. Conservative estimates of the economic costs of loss of productivity due to violence against women (VAW) are around 2 percent of global GDP globally.³⁶ It is estimated that violence against girls and women costs the South African economy a staggering R28.4-billion to R42.2-billion a year.^{37,38} Of concern is that there are weak inter-sectoral collaborations between provincial departments of health, non-governmental organisations (NGOs), the South African Police Service (SAPS) and the justice system when dealing with GBV cases.³⁹ Victims are not assured of getting speedy assistance from the courts as this is dependent on the availability of magistrates.⁴⁰

Policy Recommendations

³⁰ http://www3.weforum.org/docs/WEF_Human_Capital_Report_2015.pdf

³¹ The Gender Gap Index was first introduced by the World Economic Forum in 2006 as a framework for capturing the magnitude of gender-based disparities and tracking their progress. The Index benchmarks national gender gaps on economic, political, education and health criteria, and provides country rankings that allow for effective comparisons across regions and income groups- WEF

³² <http://reports.weforum.org/global-gender-gap-report-2014/economies/#economy=ZAF> – WEF Gender Gap Index 2014

³³ http://www.gov.za/sites/www.gov.za/files/Status_of_women_in_SA_economy.pdf

³⁴ <http://www.engineeringnews.co.za/article/number-of-women-in-science-technology-alarmingly-low-2013-03-08>

³⁵ UNESCO Institute of Statistics

³⁶ World Bank 2013

³⁷ See <http://www.kpmg.com/za/en/issuesandinsights/articlespublications/general-industries-publications/pages/too-costly-to-ignore.aspx>

³⁸ South Africa.info. 2014. Internet source, <http://www.southafrica.info/services/rights/gender-051212.htm#.VZJSak3vpzl>

³⁹ South Africa Year book 2013/2014 – Health

⁴⁰ <http://www.ngopulse.org/blogs/report-finds-continued-challenges-implementation-domestic-violence-act>



In line with the AU's declaration on Women's Empowerment and Development signed in Johannesburg June 2015. ONE puts forward the following recommendations to the South Africa government.

Health

Improve prenatal care and efforts to reduce mother to child transmission of HIV.

To reduce the mother to child transmission of HIV, the government needs increased solutions that allow women and children in remote areas to receive pre-natal and child health care through other mechanisms like mobile clinics instead mandating a hospital or clinic visit. Monthly mobile clinics can be established in various strategic areas (perhaps for one weekend each month) where women can receive pre-natal care in their local areas, and avoid long queues at clinics or hospitals. Also, the Department of Health should set aside a specified budgetary amount for pre-natal care so that it is not swallowed up under the general primary health care overall budget.

Adopt and implement policies to ensure that medical staffs are sensitive and professional when dealing with HIV positive pregnant women. This would increase care for HIV positive pregnant women's attitudes because of the improved patient experience.

Access to Economic and Political Opportunities

Gender Equality Bill:

More gender-responsive laws should be enacted and implemented. One such law is the Gender Equality Bill of 2013, which lapsed in May 2015. That legislation should be revisited and passed into law. When it is reinstated, it will be a huge boost to women empowerment because it will work towards improving women's access to education and eliminating discrimination and such harmful practices as gender-based violence.

Women in Agriculture:

- The government should strengthen women's land rights for instance by reforming family and inheritance laws. The Land Reform and Gender Policy and the White Paper on South African Land Policy (both of 1997), should for instance be translated into practice so as to be effective and successfully create an enabling environment for a gender-sensitive land reform as was the initial aim when they were formulated. Policy on its own is not enough there should be programs and processes were by the policies are translated into practice so that they can benefit women..
- It is also crucial to enhance women's access to and use of technologies which would reduce the amount of labour they would use.
- Also of importance is that government should help facilitate women's access to profitable local and international markets e.
- Good statistical systems need to be developed so as to keep track of the number of women benefiting from the land programmes and measure successes.

Corporate leadership

An increase in women's participation in more leadership roles should be enabled. This can be done by having more empowering and training programmes like the Corporate Governance Development Programme run by DTI which prepares and equips women to serve on private and public entity boards.

**Political Participation:**

To enable women to participate politically, civic education should be done so that women become informed about the electoral process, the meaning of elections and the right to vote. These types of activities can increase women turn out as voters..

Women's Participation in Conflict Prevention and Management:

Engagement in capacity building and training should be done to identify women in the field of peace and security. It is also important that more women be appointed to high-level decision-making positions and peace processes as Special Envoys, Special Representatives of the Secretary-General (SRSGs), mediators, negotiators and peacekeepers.

Transparency and Accountability in the Budget Process:

In preparing the budget, the government should take into account factors which make it a Gender Responsive Budget and that it is based on up-to-date gender disaggregated data. It is also important to involve women in the budget from the beginning of the process and monitoring thereafter so that they also have a say especially in regards to monies allocated towards their empowerment.

Access to Education, Science, and Technology**Investment in Women's Education in Science and Technology:**

Since the government budget on education is not broken down to have an amount specially set aside for the education of the girl child and women, it is important to have a specified amount set aside to educate the girl child and women in science related fields in particular.

Career Guidance:

Inform girls and women about the significance of the fields of science and technology through career guidance workshops and job fairs. This can be an incentive for women to take up careers in areas or fields of work with which they are not traditionally associated, such as physics, mathematics and engineering.

Job Shadowing and Mentoring:

Put in place mentoring programmes which can be used as a way to motivate girls and women so they can believe in themselves.

Address violence against Girls and Women & improve their Access to Justice**Capacity Building of Personnel Offering GBV Services:**

Whilst an integrated approach in the form of the Thuthuzela Care Centres exists, it is important to capacitate medical practitioners, police and social works and other personnel involved in GBV services to enable good coordination. That coordination will benefit victims by assuring a faster and a smoother run of services and assistance.

More Government Initiatives to Combat GBV:

The government should embark on more initiatives to combat GBV. Of importance should be to encourage private sector participation and leadership in programmes to prevent and eliminate GBV, for example by collaborating on GBV programmes. Private sector initiatives can range from full corporate social responsibility (CSR) programmes, employee wellness and counselling services which are trained to respond to GBV and cultural change programmes to encourage men to be part of the solution for eliminating GBV.

Effective Justice System:



The Criminal Justice System should be capacitated to address GBV where and when it occurs. For, instance increasing the number of magistrates can avoid situations where victims are waiting to be assisted because one is not available. Also Sexual Offences Courts should be increased to cater for GBV.⁴¹

⁴¹ In a report by the ANC in 2014 (<http://www.anc.org.za/docs/discus/2014/genderz.pdf>) it was found that these courts were at some point as many as 74 in 2005 but were reduced to 50 in 2009 and rose to only 57 in 2013. These kinds of inconsistencies should not occur.